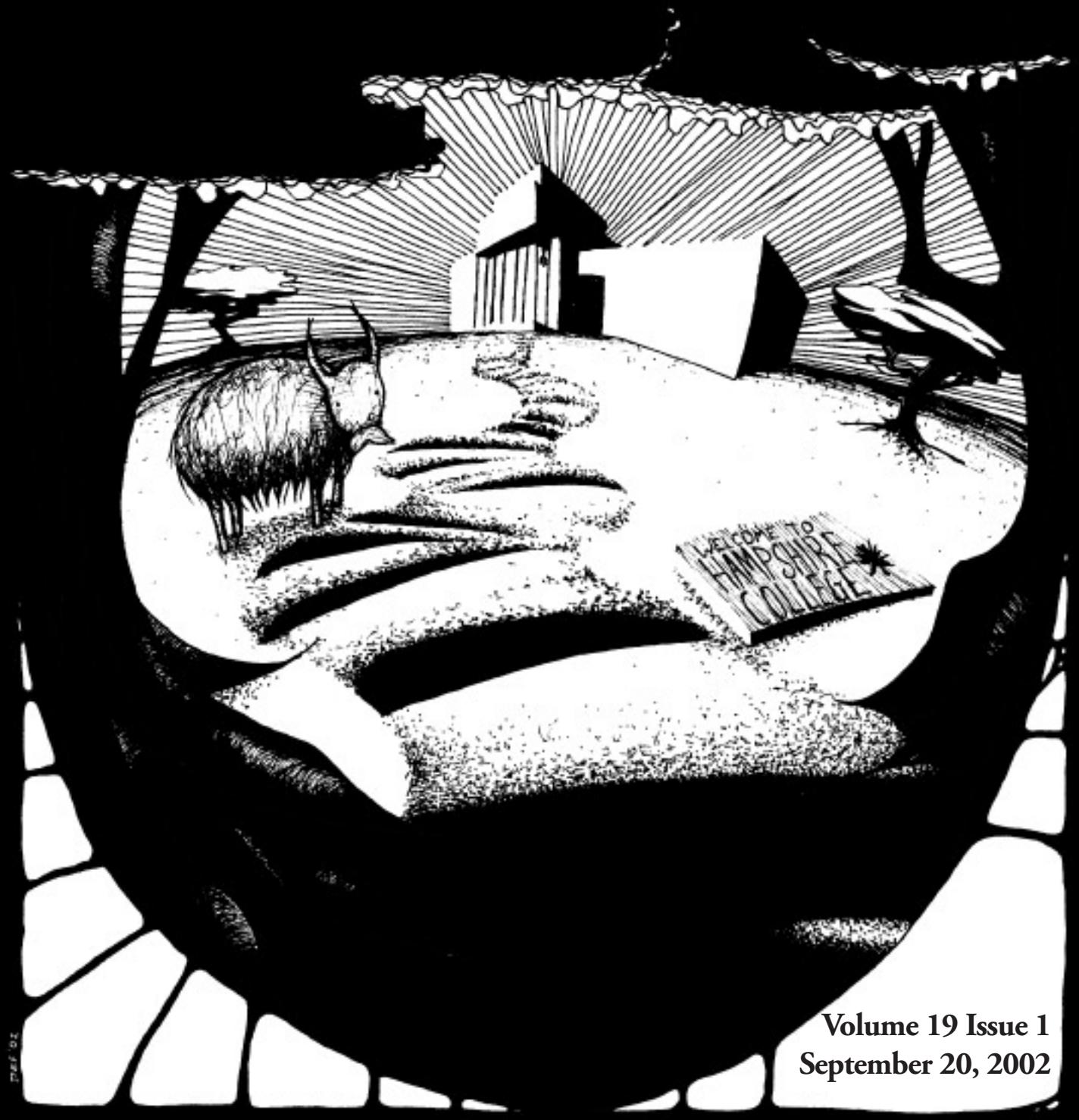


The Omen



Volume 19 Issue 1
September 20, 2002



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Volume 19, Number 1
September 20, 2002

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Cover and back cover by
David Frankel



to submit

Submissions are due Saturdays before 7 p.m. You can submit by diskette (Mac or IBM) in rich text or plain text format, and typed hard copies will also be accepted, reluctantly. Label your disks well and they will get back to you. Get your stuff to Michael Zole: Merrill C108, Box 853, x4481. You may also use e-mail. Send e-mail submissions to ajm99@hampshire.edu.

And be sure to read our policy box at the bottom of the next page before submitting.

Visit the Omen's very simple website at omen.hampshire.edu

The hard thing is getting it on.

Quote attributed to Aaron Buchsbaum, on installing Linux versus uninstalling it

PUTTING THE "VAT" IN "RENOVATION"

an editorial



Welcome to the *Omen*. For reasons beyond my control, this issue is coming out a week later than expected, but I think you'll find the content well worth it. For you first-years (and returning students who haven't been paying attention), the *Omen* is Hampshire's very own open-submission magazine. That means you write (or draw!) things and we print them, no questions asked. The idea of people on campus reading something you wrote may seem scary, but it's actually quite easy. I think everyone at Hampshire should write for the *Omen* at least once, although preferably not all at the same time, since that would make for a huge issue.

This is my fourth year at Hampshire, and recently it has seemed like Hampshire is going through a lot of changes. (Of course, everyone who has ever gone to Hampshire probably thinks the same thing about *their* eras, but humor me, because I don't have any other topic ideas for this editorial.) You've got your superficial changes – the Dakin renovation, the new signs which make Hampshire look fairly presentable, the increasingly finished Eric Carle museum, or the new brick walkway outside the library which also looks pretty snazzy. Then you've got your academic changes, including the multiple cultural perspectives requirement (which I'm currently slogging my way through) and the new first-year plan (which I'm not totally clear on, but it seems easier than the previous system, so fuck it).

Then there are the social changes. These are the hardest to gauge, but there have been

some odd trends. I've heard reports – take them with a grain of salt, of course – that Hampshire's attrition rate for the Fall 2001 class was incredibly low compared to previous years. Some of us grizzled older students noted that a majority of this class also got their Div I projects done promptly, started student groups, did notable work in their chosen fields, and other crap that *real* Hampshire students don't do until their third or fourth semesters. As Zak Kauffman put it in an *Omen* article last year, they were "uppity bastards". It's like that fake Monopoly rule where you can't buy any properties until you go around the board once. F01 wasn't doing that. They were playing *by the rules on the box*, buying up Ventnor Avenue or whatever on their first roll. I'm not sure where I'm going with this metaphor, but my point stands. I don't know why or how Hampshire started attracting so many non-slackers, but it's scary. Those of us who came here to avoid getting graded will end up on the streets, holding signs saying "WON'T WORK FOR FOOD".

Don't get me wrong. I salute these uppity bastards, and if the new signs are any indication, Hampshire may be on its way to getting some kind of respect. Just do me a favor: while you're busy not dropping out of Hampshire, consider writing a 700-word *Omen* article every now and then. I've revived my second column (Section Zole) this semester, and if you people don't start writing, I may have to introduce a third.



policy

The *Omen* is Hampshire's longest-running bi-weekly publication, established by Stephanie Cole in December of 1992. In the past, submissions have included students' perspectives on the campus, administration, news, movie reviews, commentary, short fiction, satire, first born, artwork, comics, and the occasional embarrassing self-promotion. Everything the *Omen* receives will be published unless it is deemed libelous or defamatory. Libel will be considered clearly false or unsupportable writing that maliciously damages a person's reputation.

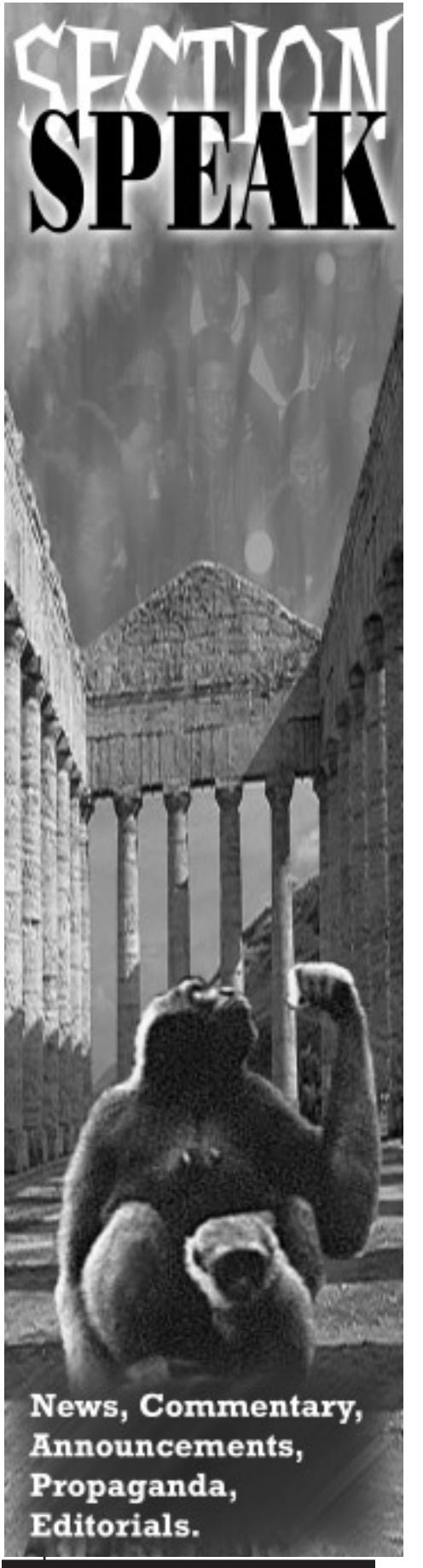
The *Omen* will also not edit anything you write (except spelling and grammar), as long as you are willing to be completely responsible for what you say. You must sign your real name (no anonymous

submissions) and understand that you are responsible for what you say. Nonetheless, views in the *Omen* do not necessarily represent the views of anyone, living or dead.

Columnists are those who've submitted three consecutive articles. Layout editors are those who've helped put this particular issue together. There is no *Omen* staff; the "staff" changes with each issue. To qualify for community service you must be a columnist and help regularly with layout. Layout times (and such) will be discussed at our meetings: every other Tuesday (each following the release of an issue), in the Airport Lounge, 9PM. Everyone, everywhere, living and dead, should come.

The *Omen* loves you.





**News, Commentary,
Announcements,
Propaganda,
Editorials.**

HAMPSHIRE IRRELEVANCE

Thank you, Margaret Cerullo. On Wednesday, September 11th, 2002, you reminded me again why Hampshire will always be considered that weird little hippie school in ... where was it again? New Hampshire?

A friend took me along when she went to the panel discussion about the aftermath of (last) September 11th put on by PAWSS. Almost all the speakers, while leaning toward the left politically (the understatement of the year), made reasoned arguments, backed up with actual evidence. They knew who they were talking to; they knew they could have made rallying comments, saying the same things we've heard over and over again from the left, and received copious applause for it, but, in general, they avoided this path. They kept their composure, stayed calm, and generally gave off the aura of a group of intelligent people, which they undoubtedly are. Which brings us to the "almost."

While Cerullo's talk (on the effects of 9/11 on America, which she approached by examining the effects on a variety of groups of people, such as the hip hop, feminist, or queer communities) was informative and her approach interesting, she seemed to be rushing through it, moving from group to group without, to my ears, a single full stop. In terms of pure public speaking ability, she, the lone Hampshire professor on the panel, this college's only representative at an event attended by a fair-sized group of non-Hampshire people, and thus, the only model of what Hamp-

shire is for a number of Pioneer Valley community members, was clearly the worst of the seven panelists.

If she were simply a bad speaker, though, I wouldn't be nearly as annoyed. In addition to essentially delivering her whole talk in one run-on sentence, however, she insisted on using the platform to promote her pet causes, saying something to the effect of, "You can talk to me afterward about how to sign up," at least twice. There is a time and place for everything, and this was neither the time nor the place for recruiting new members for her organizations. Is it any wonder Dominic David in *The Forward* last year compared Hampshire classes to Army recruitment stations?

Until Hampshire sheds the image created by people like Cerullo, a diploma from this school is not going to be able to carry its own weight, so to speak. A Harvard or Yale graduate gets kicked up a few notches in the world because of where they went to school; Hampshire seems to get us kicked down a few notches. Obviously, a large part of that has nothing to do with radicalism; the lack of grades and predefined majors makes people nervous, and a whole host of other factors also contribute. People might someday start to ignore those things, however, if Hampshire students were seen on the news doing things other than burning flags and if Hampshire professors didn't try to turn serious discussions into political rallying.

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by Jason Wojciechowski, contributor

SPEAKING FOR MYSELF

Speaking for myself and no one else, I was going to write an article roundly condemning Mod 101's recent advertising campaign for their Friday the 13th party. I still am condemning it but it's a good thing I had some spirited debates with a few Hampshire students about this issue first. Again, I speak for myself, not for others who may have been offended, and certainly not for my office or for "the administration" (an abstract concept which doesn't exist really anyway). As those debates reminded me, there are plenty of folks out there who are frustrated as all hell with PC liberalism and self-righteousness on this campus. In their view we aren't free to say, in jest, "calling all sluts: come to a party and give us head like the bitches you are." Many people can't see any humor in that, no matter how hard you try to explain it to them. I can see how some people can find humor in that, BUT it can only be humorous in a VERY specific context. As my friend, a Hampshire alum, explained "It's like they are making fun of the kind of guys at UMass who would say that and mean it." So basically what you have is people adopting a sort of hate speech, or at least disrespectful speech, in a way that is meant to be joking and mocking of those who use it, but, importantly, ALSO mocking of those who can't differentiate between the group that has adopted the speech and the original group that created it. Let me re-explain that: Joe Frat boy acts, thinks and talks in a way that is unacceptably misogynist, sexist, racist, heterosexist, whatever... all those terms that are thrown

around. Jack and Ginger Hampshire student mock Joe Frat boy by imitating his speech and imagery. People perceive that speech in a way that was not intended and are hurt by it. Hampshire PC patrol calls Jack and Ginger racist and sexist, etc. and there are seminars all over campus and arguments about intentions and free speech. Jack and Ginger's friends strike again a few months later with more of the same, perhaps doing it just to piss off the PC patrol. Others who weren't aware of the original speech acts, their context, and the PC reaction, witness these new (to them) acts and the cycle starts again.

I think the best way to recount this is to tell you it from my experience, chronologically. I first saw an ad outside SAGA- it said "CUMGITYOFUGON" on the bottom and I suppose it was the CUM that caught my eye. (Yes feel free to read into that if you want).

Anyway, I had to sit there for a second and decode it into standard English and that took awhile because I'm pushing 30 and apparently not as "with it" as I used to be. But as soon as I figured out that it started off with "Come get your..." I was clued in. Anyway the ad had a large graphic of the male symbol (circle with arrow) and was promoting for a party in Mod 101 on September 13th. It said "MOD 101 needs it" I also noticed the phrase "Ladies Drink Free." And as I walked away I thought about the juxtaposition of

the graphic of the male symbol, the CUM, and the Ladies drinking free and decided that whoever put this up was a total schmuck. In retrospect, I get it (the joke), or at least I think I do, but I'll come back to that.

Later I was perusing the Jolt and I saw the following thread:

Subject: cum git yo fugg on
Anonymous poster "Sexy bish":
"<http://www.phonzarelli.com/party/>
keep hitting the button to see them all!"

Everyone else on the thread was anonymous as well.

Boris: "you have got to be kidding"

That bish "what's so hard to believe? you cummin' or not?"

DivaD: "and those were the clean ones.."

Hehe: "hehe, we're coming.

Thanks Shel!"

[referring to Shel Matthews, the intern who lives in 101]

**There are better ways
to mock overzealous
political correctness
without perpetuating
the real problems that
the original purveyors
of PC were trying to
remedy.**

So I clicked and looked at the first image and it was basically the same flier (with the CUM and the ladies drink free and all) except the graphic of the male symbol was replaced with a graphic of a man and a woman fucking in the missionary position. It said on the top "Mission Accomplished." The graphic wasn't very detailed or realistic and you couldn't tell if these were happy, consenting, sober people

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A WORD ABOUT ACTIVISM

Activists are a peculiar thing on this campus. Not that they don't fit, for indeed, activism has always been a defining feature of Hampshire's population. But it seems to me that activists often tend to get a bad rap around here. Granted, they've pulled some eye-raising acts here and there, like the flag burnings, the all community vote, and the accepted students day fiasco last year, but I think that some of the criticism towards them is unwarranted and overly harsh.

For example: Aren't we all activists in a sense, anyway? Aren't we always intentionally acting on some emotion, idea, or out of reaction to something? Sure, it may not always be about some cause, or "ism", but it's acting out nonetheless. And our actions always have real effects, politically, socially, personally, and spiritually.

But self-serving crusades need to be criticized. Indeed, for some, activism simply becomes yet another means to seek status. This is hypocritical,

because it is more important of how you see yourself than how other people see you. It becomes obvious when someone acts out of expectation of some reward, rather than out of a true commitment to service. True activism is working without the expectation of some reward; it is a matter of selflessly giving back to the greater community and always doing what you know to be right.

One thing I do agree with the critics on is the observation that people here are quick, a bit too quick, to label other people. Labels are not only limiting, they're often damaging. When you label something, you automatically affix that thing to a particular class, which is to limit it, because there is inevitably a larger side to the picture.

There are times when it becomes necessary to see beyond our labels, political differences, and cultural beliefs and see each other as human beings. Sometimes, it really can't be stressed enough that WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER. It's

impossible for a consensus to be reached on any issue, and frankly, I think there probably shouldn't be a consensus on most tough issues (with the possible exception of no-brainer issues like the death penalty – I mean, how the fuck can you teach that killing is wrong by killing people?). We all live here on this campus, and we need to be able to live together, peacefully, cooperatively, respectfully. In case there are any doubts, this does not mean that we all have to agree with each other (unless we agree to differ). Diversity is the spice of life, and without it, we fall victim to bland conformity.

We need to keep the dialogue alive. Keep the activism alive. Keep the ideals alive. But not at the expense of losing unity in our community. We need to affirm our humanity, which is to say, we need to affirm our differences, because what makes us all the same is that we're all different, in our own unique, special way.

Peace & love, everyone.



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or something different.

At the time I couldn't figure out what the Jolt post meant by "keep hitting the button" so I didn't initially see the other versions: a diversity of images, some that made me laugh out loud when I did ultimately see them, most of which I personally would not have had a problem with- though I'm sure others who can't deal with anything sexual at all would have been offended. I should note that

SPEAKING FOR MYSELF

the women all seem to be white and have long hair and the same body type, and there are NO graphic depictions of two men getting it on (still apparently a taboo even to these supposedly liberated folks). If I had seen all these images together at the same time, I might not have reacted quite the way I did. But basically, at the time, I felt that this ad campaign was saying "we are some horny guys in mod 101 and we are really

desperate to get laid and so, ladies, please come and get really drunk so we can fuck you."

So I was angry and felt pity for these boys and felt frustrated because I always have so much trouble explaining just what is wrong with this picture. Now, I don't think its bad to say you are a horny guy and you really want to get laid. I don't think its bad to represent male heterosexuality. And I don't think its bad if some

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women want to go party with these guys and get it on. (Though maybe these guys should just get with each other, but that's another article)

I do think that "Ladies Drink Free" is bad in every way. Need I explain that it implies sexual assault and date rape? I hope not. (If you need that explained, please jump off a cliff right now). And I do understand that those who posted it might have been trying to mock "ladies drink free." The Simpsons did it very effectively by adding a word and putting it on a banner at Moe's Bar: "unesecuted ladies drink free." If Mod's 101 posters had said "unesecuted ladies drink free," then it would be more obvious that they, like the first reaction post on the Jolt, "have to be kidding." [Often people who post to a thread on the Jolt don't get the joke and say things like that]

But its simply not that obvious to many people that they are kidding. And even though I know they are kidding, I'm still bothered by some of those posters. First, the use of speech in this way doesn't really mock those who use it seriously. Maybe if it was done better like on The Simpsons it would succeed on that level. In fact if Joe Fratboy were to witness these posters, he wouldn't know he was being mocked. One might say that's the beauty of it. But it doesn't do anything to subvert the problematic behaviors and actions that result from the use of that speech or prevent the feelings experienced by women who are subjected to it. The perpetrators are not going to stop because you secretly mock them. And you know what else? Its not just Joe

SPEAKING FOR MYSELF

Frat boy who is guilty of intimidation, sexual assault and rape. Its some of us right here on this campus as well.

One thing that is done very effectively with this use of speech is the mocking of the PC patrol. And maybe they need that. But there are better ways to mock overzealous political correctness without perpetuating the real problems that the original purveyors of PC were trying to remedy.

Because in your mocking you also succeed in hurting people, in putting fear into the hearts of those that don't get it, that don't know the context. A joke like that, one that is only funny to some people and hurtful to others might have a place at Hampshire, its just not on the Jolt, in the Omen or on publicly posted fliers. Its something you would put in a private invitation to specific people who you know will understand what you mean..

Anyway, back to the story... So I ran into (Prescott House Director) Zena and she had already seen some of the fliers and was going to act on it. We went over the problems (beyond the fact that the party wasn't registered yet, you can't advertise free alcohol and you can't charge for alcohol). She then had a meeting with the two signers for the party, Rick Dudley and Trevor Jensen and ultimately allowed them to have the party. But the ads had to come down. Zena told me they claimed that the Jolt post was already down. As it turns out the Jolt post was still up the next day. That is how I was able to quote from it for this article. In fact I actually went back and figured out I just needed to hit the "refresh"

button and then I wound up seeing about 20 different images. I printed them all out so I could get people's opinion.

The day after Zena had her conversation with the boys from 101, I saw a new flier. It had the same "Mod 101 needs it" and the CUMGIT... on the bottom but the graphics were gone and so were the allusions to drunk ladies. Now it was: "CENSORED: Due to political pressure, this poster has been deemed too hot for you to see. Go figure."

And that's when I sat down to write this article. Because the cycle is starting again. Zena's attempt to explain it to the boys from 101 was NOT censorship and was not "political pressure" The posters in question (and that is only some of the posters) aren't "hot." Again, its not the sexual nature of them that I have a problem with. There is nothing wrong with a sexual poster or with erotic imagery. There is

nothing wrong with promoting sex, saying you want sex and asking people to have sex with you. It is what those images and words mean and imply in this context and in relation to each other. Maybe they are just trying to piss off the PC patrol and make what you think is a funny ad, but many people don't get it. And that matters. In reality, intimidation, harassment, assault and rape happen, right here at Hampshire. And that REALLY matters. So if you publicly use speech, regardless of its true intent, that will be perceived by many to be promoting a certain type of sexual behavior that basically amounts to sex without consent [read: assault], I'm gunahgitinyoface.



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HAMPSHIRE IRRELEVANCE

Honestly, it's a little embarrassing. It's like having to bring your kid brother with you when you're trying to hang out with the cool kids; he can't help but make you uncool.

A few other thoughts on the panel:

Why can't people do something other than mock President Bush once in a while? I think he's as mindless as the next person does, but, as Michael Klare noted after the minute or so we caught of his address, we were watching him to try to find some clues about a potential invasion of Iraq. Making fun of his accent (would he really be made fun of as much as he does were he not from Texas? I can't believe that at Hampshire of all places, people resort to this kind of mockery. In some sense, you could call it a cultural slur.) does nothing at all toward that end; it simply gets in the way of the 475-odd people who are there to try to find out something new.

Do PAWSS and Hampshire in general realize that the left viewpoint is not the only possible valid one? Couldn't we ever have a debate between, say, Michael Klare and Peter Beinart (editor of *The New Republic*)?

This was pounded on a little bit by a small group of students last year, including *The Forward*'s editor, Austen Rachlis, arguing that Hampshire should not just "happen" to be politically biased, as it is now; if it wants to maintain its current political stance, it needs to weigh the pros and cons of actively and consciously being a leftist institution. I agree with that sentiment, though I don't believe the school would

ever take that step; I'd much rather the college actually make a commitment to neutrality. There are few attempts by Hampshire to expose students to any viewpoints but those of the faculty here; those faculty actually believe that they have no responsibility to make any such attempt. I don't expect that viewpoint to change, so we need a new approach. Maybe this can be put in the form of a challenge: **The professors here are scared that their views won't hold up under the scrutiny of those who hold opposing opinions.** Prove me wrong.

Of course, the big problem is that it's very hard to make that first step, to be, for example, the first student group to bring a conservative speaker to campus. The fear of being ostracized is too great. A few brave souls started a campus Republicans chapter here last semester; here's to hoping that they are not driven away by the intolerance Hampshire exhibits sometimes, and that they can successfully bring some other views to the table.

Michael Klare is an impressive man, mainly for two reasons. First, he's got more contacts in the government than he probably knows what to do with. He pretty regularly tossed off comments that alluded to the fact that he was chatting with people in organizations like the CIA. Second, he gets paid pretty well to basically be a huge news junkie. Most of his talk was, "Well, noting

reports in newspapers x and y along with Bush's speeches on days a, b, and c, we conclude that America *will* invade Iraq." I

guess the thing that strikes me the most is that this is basically what conspiracy nuts do: they read lots of newspapers, watch tons of TV, and make wild claims about what all those things mean when you find the connections. The only difference is that Klare gets to do this in front of Congress.

Finally, how about the panel's treatment of two comments/questions from the audience? Lester Mazor, at the end of the first session, noted emphatically from the back of the room that he was surprised that no one had mentioned the upcoming elections; presumably, he wanted someone to mention their importance in sending a message, in showing further that Bush has no mandate, and so on, but nobody stepped up. After the end of the second session, Tal Spitzer noted that she saw no one on the panel address the history of the Israel-Palestine conflict, as well as the fact that each of the panelists who approached the topic did so from a pro-Palestine point of view. Her concern was met with a somewhat terse response by one of the panelists, who simply repeated what she had said in her prepared speech, skirting around the issues Spitzer wanted addressed. Somehow, I don't think that Spitzer was referring to the 2000 Camp David talks when she mentioned the history of the conflict, but the discussion from the panelists didn't seem to extend much further than that.

What's the upshot of all of this? I'm still pretty sure I made the right college decision.



by Beth Day, columnist

I think those who don't know me very well, and even those who know me somewhat well, would think it odd for me to become an *Omen* signer. I'm not bitter about Hampshire and I tend not to say things that make you feel like you're being kicked in the stomach. I don't like to take on touchy issues and I'd much rather write about my childhood and NS.

I became a signer because the *Omen* is important to me. I write for the *Omen* because I have a hard time expressing myself to other people. I don't like talking in front of people unless I feel I know them pretty well, though I can get quite loud when I'm nervous. Through writing for the *Omen* I found a way to show a small part of who I am. I think we all have a desire for self-expression, and we all come about it in different ways. I think the value of the *Omen* is in its use as an avenue for expression. It's not about entertainment or being funny, it's simply about expression. It doesn't matter if the writing sucks or it's pure self-promotion. What matters is that people are given the opportunity to put themselves out to the community through the written word.

Since I started doing the *Omen* thing, I have struggled with a lot of questions because one can't help but be swept up in *Omen* controversy. After conversations with various people and

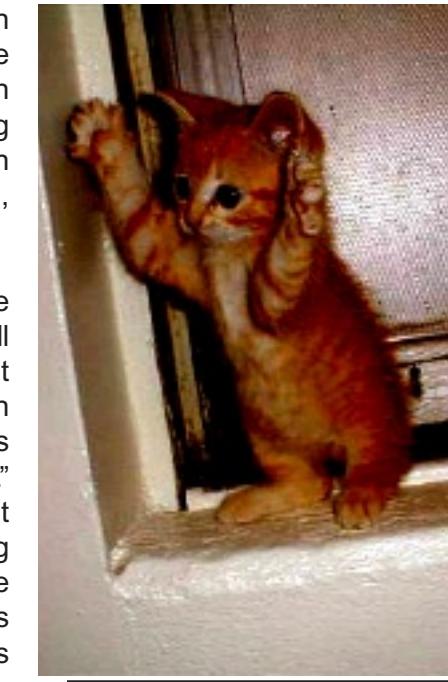
LET'S ALL LOVE ONE ANOTHER RIGHT NOW

Annie Gomberg, your "designated friend."

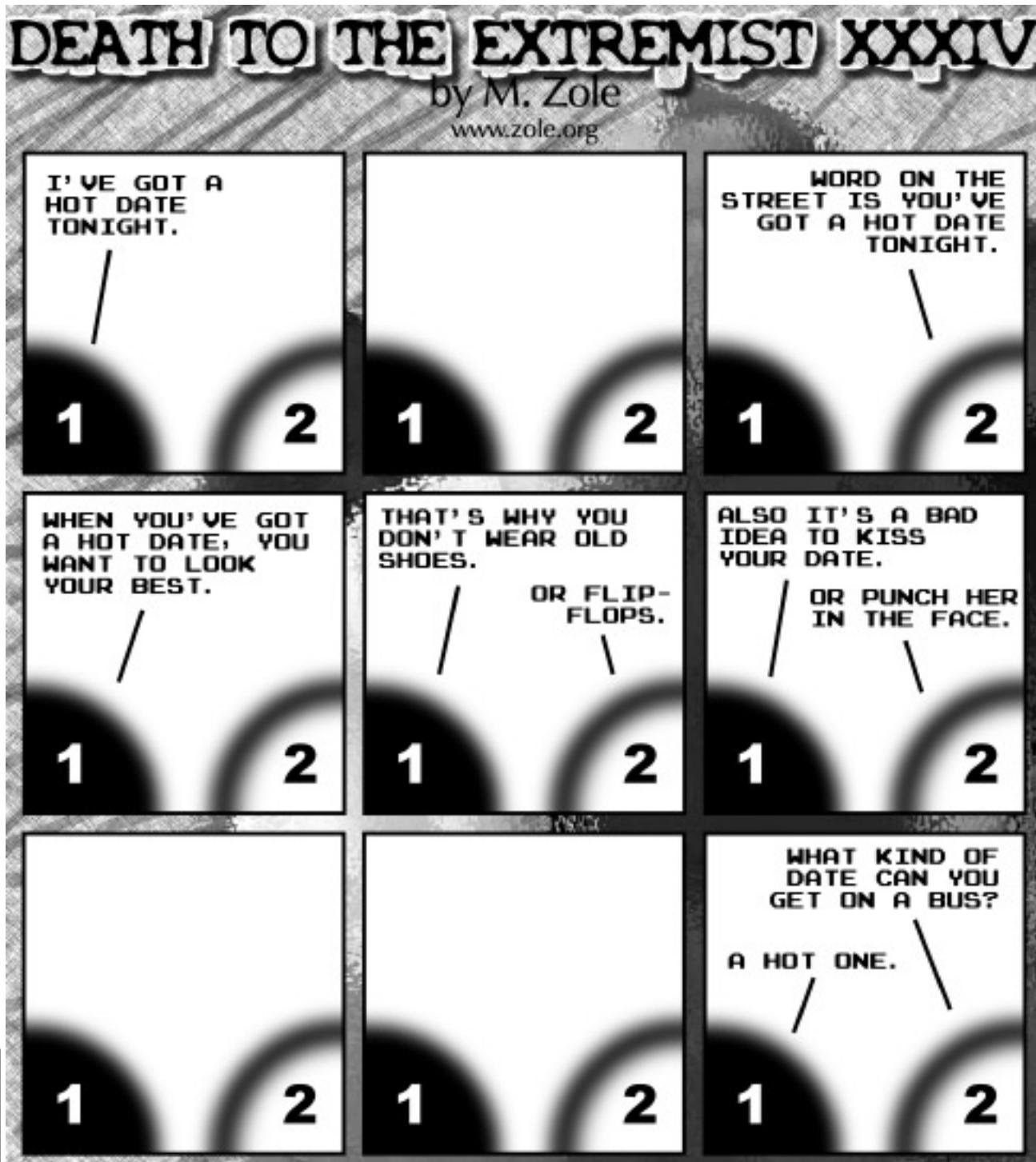
If we're asking you to quiet down, it's because we're concerned about those people trying to sleep or study. If it's alcohol we're telling you to get out of the common spaces, it's because state and federal laws do not stop at the boundaries of Hampshire College. You're in college, not high school, so act like a responsible human being. Being nasty to who you perceive as "authority figures" no longer makes you cool. Interns are students just like you, trying to help everyone somehow manage to live together. If our job was more of a "policing" type job, I doubt many of us would do it.



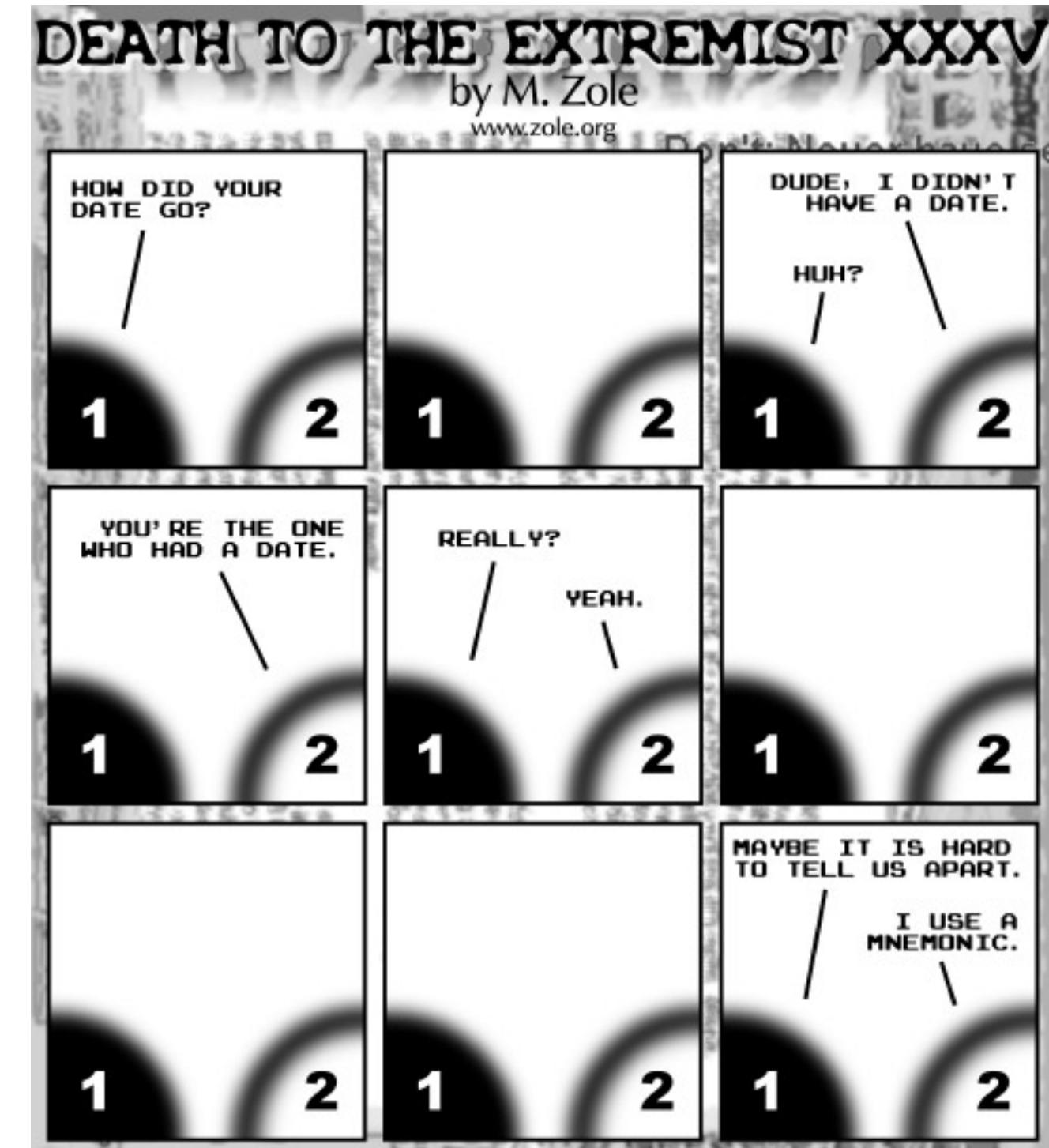
Here's a kitten. --ed.



DEATH To THE EXTREMIST...



Now IN CENTERFOLD FORMAT



If you like Death To The Extremist (it could happen), more episodes are available at www.zole.org/extremist. --Zole



TOKEN LATINA RETURNS TO HER HOMELAND

This summer, after a relatively depressing semester, I decided I needed to go home. Please note that home is not where my parents live. My parents live in the hellhole known as Tampa, FL. I spent my summer of 2001 in Tampa working for Regal Cinema and fending off my 16 yr old co-worker's request for "mad head". I really didn't feel like doing that again. So off with my best friend from High School to my favorite third world country: Ecuador.

I hadn't been back to Ecuador in three years so naturally I expected to have changed a little. It actually really hasn't. Best Friend Fran has always hated Ecuador with an undying passion so she spent most of the summer pissed that Ecuador had remained almost exactly as she had left it. I on the other hand was thrilled. My deep depression had lifted and I was determined to find out everything about the Ecuadorean sex trade.

I was back and better than ever. Moreover because I was such a novelty I was suddenly considered to be the official hot, hard drinking girl. I love how no one thinks my drinking is much of a problem, most were delighted to buy my drinks. During my summer stay I spent about 3 weeks of it at my family's house. They were fully aware of my lushful ways and thought my hangovers to be amusing. The best part was how freaking cheap the cigarettes were. I am not a smoker by trade but throw me into a third world country where cigarettes are only 70 cents a pack I can't really help but indulge some. They go so well with my Tropico.

So prostitutes in Ecuador make

about 5 bucks a throw. Now the estimated length of the transaction is about 5 minutes. I dunno about you but I can't even get myself off in just five minutes. I am sure one can blow some more dough for some more time. They make about \$600 dollars a week. Frankly I feel like this statistic cannot possibly exist. I did the math and that comes down to having sex with 120 men a week. I worry about their vaginas. I know there are some social programs to make sure these women are disease free. In fact if you go to the sketchier parts of town on a Saturday morning you can see lots of prostitutes waiting in line at the clinic to get checked out.

While I was there I dated this guy named Xavier. He had all sorts of information for me and was kind enough to on one of our dates to show me where the 25 cent strip club was. He explained to me that strip clubs in Ecuador were divided up by price ranges. You had the 25 cent clubs, \$5-10 clubs, \$20-30 clubs, and the \$40-50 clubs. The cheaper the club the less attractive the women and more likely that they are locals. The more one is willing to shell out to see some snatch the more likely she would be from countries like Colombia, Argentina, Brazil etc. The most expensive clubs feature European and US back-packers. If that isn't internalizing your oppression I don't know what is.

My summer goal fulfilled I rewarded myself with some more beer and 90 cent pork sandwiches. Just thinking about it makes my mouth water.



by Laura Torres, contributor



by Sasha Horwitz, columnist

It was all supposed to come down to dodgeball. Not a battle of intellectual superiority, but a challenge in the courts. Us against them. Geeks V. Dorks. You thought you were so hot with your glitter and your macaroni and your Patrick Stewart. That was before you met our baker's dozen of kickassery. If only we had gotten to take you on, like we were supposed to. If only you had learned what it felt like to taste gravel. If only those jerks hadn't shown up. But what can I say, my past is painted with "if only..."s.

The balls were drawn along the midline, like bacon waiting to be stolen. Our film fucks fantasized of wreaking havoc in your fanfiction friendly battlefield. We were going to send you to deep space nine. Flay. Slaughter. Kill, kill, kill!

And then what happened? Did someone slip away and cry uncle? Where did that gaggle of geese come from? Off to you rescue, weak maidens, came a team we knew better than to fuck with: A goddamn, jock-riddled, card-carrying dodgeball ORIENTATION GROUP.

What happened to the days when Orientation was about sending the sporty spicess off campus so we could taste, for once, the nectar of social superiority?

In other words, who the fuck do you think you are? The A-team!

I bit my tongue when they first arrived. I wanted to say, Thanks, that's mighty kind of you, but we

MY ORIENTATION GROUP CONSIDERS KICKING YOUR ORIENTATION GROUP'S ASS.

don't need any help scoring on their lily white asses. But like Poland I pretended not to mind the invasion. And these fuckers

Camp geek allied with camp dork, and together we were still dead on the doorstep.

said.

1

2

1

2

Mixing. Semi-randomization. No longer were group lines impenetrable boundaries. My 'tees were going to ride on the shoulders of giants.

With the new lines drawn, there was no reason that one team should have continued to win. But it did happen.

Happened until...the new team of losers got violent. No one saw it coming. They were celebrating irony when like a cork off champagne a ball sped through the air and knocked one of my teammates down. A head shot. A VIOLATION. That was it.

The game was over. Some of us never tasted that victory. Some of us got bitter. And some of us, like me, still hold on to the thought that we let them win. I mean,

who wants to take away from a jock, the only think he has to be proud of?





by Michael Zole, columnist

Note: For my (hopefully) last year at Hampshire, I have decided to revive my old column, "Section ZOLE". However, from here on out it will be about video games. For two years I've avoided writing about games, since I got more positive feedback on my column when I wrote about, say, candy. But I did my Div II in video games, I'm doing my Div III in video games, and I'm interning at a game development company, so fuck it, I'm going to write about games.

Up, up, down, down, left, right, left, right, B, A, start. This is the Konami Code, and if you grew up in the 80s (you did), there's a good chance this sequence is lodged firmly in your brain, next to the phrases "more than meets the eye" and "comes with everything you see here".

Konami secretly included this code in several Nintendo games, most notably Contra, where entering the code at the title screen gave each player 30 lives instead of three. Helpful, to be sure, and it's damn near impossible to finish the game without it, but what strikes me to this day is that everyone in my second-grade class, almost none of whom owned Contra, could recite this code in a heartbeat. And they often would. This was back when watching someone play a video game was just as exciting as playing it yourself, so it wouldn't be unusual to see a group of youngsters crowded into the living room of some Contra-owning friend, all frantically screaming "UP! UP! DOWN! DOWN! LEFT! RIGHT!" and so forth. The game was cool and all, but shooting aliens on some South American island just can't match

THE CODES MAKE THE MAN

the pulse-pounding excitement of entering a code. Besides, since it's possible to "accidentally" kill the other player in a cooperative game, the code's gift of 30 lives kept many a play session from degenerating into a knife fight.

Originally, codes like this were holdovers from a game's development. Testing a game for bugs and play balance involves playing through every level countless times, so programmers will embed

codes to ease the process with infinite lives, level skipping, and so forth. It's unclear why codes made it into the final versions of games

Up, up, down, down, left, right, B, A, start.

like Contra, but since these early games were designed to munch quarters in an arcade, codes were probably a way to make the home version beatable without changing the design.

Whatever the reason, codes soon took on a life of their own. Secrets add depth to a game, and the word-of-mouth generated by the Konami code probably moved more cartridges than any TV ad. Bookstores started carrying video games "strategy guides" which were essentially lists of codes, padded to book length by paraphrased instruction manuals and (in your classier guides) screenshots. Kids can't buy \$50 games; if your parents weren't cooperating, reading these guides and fantasizing about entering codes was the next best thing to playing.

It was a while before a game started to really work the code concept, and that game was

Mortal Kombat. The game's brutal finishing moves were themselves codes; there was no way to figure them out just by playing the game, you had to learn them from someone else. The bloody graphics got people playing, but the codes got them hooked. The codes were so effective that it was a few years before players realized that Mortal Kombat was actually a terrible game.

Games still have codes these days. Some of them are quite

amusing, such as the code in *Star Wars: Rogue Leader* that lets you trade your X-Wing for a Buick. But codes are no longer as prominent

as they once were, and I attribute this to the rise of home games. Now that game consoles are nearly as powerful as arcade machines, arcades are less of a draw (unless you count *Dance Dance Revolution*), and game design has changed to reflect this. Early home games inherited the designs of their arcade predecessors, which were intentionally just hard enough to guarantee a steady flow of quarters without frustrating the player. Over time, it became clear that this wasn't a good idea if the player had just paid \$50 rather than 25 cents.

Nowadays, games like *Super Mario Sunshine* make it very easy to beat the game, providing extra challenge to players who want it. Given this approach to game design, codes have gone from indispensable (the Konami Code) to just amusing (the Buick).

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by Zak Kauffman, contributor

YOUR BLOOD FOR HAMPSHIRE

During my time at Hampshire I've always been puzzled by the high attrition rate. During my first 2 years at Hampshire the yearly drop out rate was around 30%, basically 1 out of every 3 of my friends. I wondered if this was because of a fundamental failing of Hampshire, if it meant that I went to a college that didn't serve its students, or if it meant that my friends were stupid lazy fucks. All of these things worried me.

But after 3 years at Hampshire, I've come to a greater realization about this process. Hampshire didn't fail these students, Hampshire consumed them.

A lot of different types of people come to Hampshire. Some come because they want to design their own education, some come because they hated their high schools, and many come because they want singles. Hampshire advertises itself as serving the needs of all these students and more. This is a cunning lie, serving to lure precious first years regardless of their need. However, this is not the trap of a greedy gorilla simply

Are students one & two

seeking to gorge itself on caged giraffe. This is the trap of a kind hearted giraffe, seeking to nourish its young on tender gorilla flesh. You see, Hampshire doesn't consume these first years just in order to take their money. They are sacrificed on the hampshire altar so that their fellow students may feed. Hampshire is not a place that can serve the needs of all students, but it is a place in which some students may thrive at the expense of others. When three students arrive at Hampshire, one of them is going to drop out their first year, one of them is going to go on leave their 5th semester, and one of them is going to do great. All three of these students are going to pay at least a year's tuition, allowing the third student to rent new dv camera's from media services, get half of their tuition knocked off in aid, and have free laundry machines. Student one will pass one class a semester, student two will bitch about the lack of class X, and student three will thrive in the five colleges.

A vampire could no more survive without virgin blood than a Hampshire div 3 could survive without the burnout of their peers. They will fall, they will lose the last years of their adolescence, and they will become intensely bitter & self hating.

But others will ring the div 3 bell with righteousness, and when they do they will give a silent thanks to those they stepped on to get there.



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THE CODES MAKE THE MAN

The spirit lives on, though. A recent Flash cartoon on homestarrunner.com briefly featured the message "JUSTIN BAILEY -----". This is a code for Nintendo's *Metroid*, and as so many people my age know, it lets

you play as Samus Aran wearing what appears to be a swimsuit instead of her usual armor. I'm pleasantly surprised that these codes have endured, becoming semi-obscure pop culture references. But at the same time, I'm

worried that 70 years from now, I'll be trying to explain up up down down left right left right to some poor kid who never knew the pain of trying to finish *Contra* on three lives.





MORE ARTICLES ABOUT BUILDINGS AND FOOD

Yeah, I'm back. At least for now....

A Dog Was Crying Tonight in Hampshire Also

So I get back to school to find that we have expensive new signs that give the deceitful appearance that we are a legitimate academic institution. Huh. That's kind of odd. Then I see that the beloved pile of dirt from last year has turned into an actual museum. Weird. I get to the house office and find that they don't know where my keys are. Now that's the Hampshire I know and love.

Why I wanted to live in Greenwich

First day back I am plugging away at my keyboard, when I hear some chirping. I look up just in time to see two sparrows flying directly at my head. I scream like a little girl and run out of my room, right into two more sparrows flying up the staircase at me. I run back to the bathroom and close the door, occasionally peeking out to see the birds flying about in my room and the hallway. I finally slip out and sneak by the one in the stairway that is continuously flying into the window, and make it safely to the common space. Welcome to Enfield, I guess.

Ostensible Movie Review

If you wanted to give me the budget for *xXx* and forced me to shoot on location in Prague for six months, I would be a happy man. I could have made that movie. Yup. All of it. Even the explosions.

What I Did on my Summer Vacation

Not my Div Ones, ha ha ha ha...ha...ha....oh. Right. Moving on...

Short Fiction

When I was younger, my childhood hero was Gary Carter. I still maintain that he should be in the Hall of Fame. He has more home runs than Johnny Bench, which pretty much makes him the best power-hitting catcher of all time. And though my dad keeps bringing up how he got Gooden and Strawberry hooked on cocaine, there is really only anecdotal evidence to support it, and Cooperstown has never been very good at weeding out drug dealers anyway.

Everything changed when I was nine. Carter got traded from my beloved New York Mets to the San Francisco Giants. He would bounce around the next couple years, from the Giants to the Dodgers, and then to the Expos, where he would finish his career in 92. I moved on to my second and final childhood idol, my older brother, Jericho, who by his own admission did one line of cocaine his junior year of high school, promptly passed out and woke up with the underage party hostess sucking his dick high on ecstasy. I find it hard to believe that such knowledge would have changed how everything turned out, since I'm a big believer in predestination now. Not of an interventionist god, for other rea-

sons. I haven't quite figured out how to reconcile the two yet, but I'm working on it.

Jericho was the first born, and got his name from the supposed oldest city on Earth. Oldest city, oldest son. My father thought it was a logical choice. Of course my dad only knew that because he thought the religious studies professor at his college was a hot minky, and ended up as a theology major for a semester and a half, during which he had eight classes with her. She did have great legs. I've seen pictures. My dad wasn't cut out for theology or maybe college, and dropped out and enlisted just in time for Vietnam.

I was named after a member of the Moody Blues. My dad's decision again. After giving birth to her third son, my mother decided that she would at least get to name one of them. And so my younger brother was christened Nathaniel after her paternal grandfather. Besides having a far more mundane name than his older brothers, Nate quickly decided that he had no interest in being like either one of us, which, of course, led him to be successful, athletic, and well liked by his peers. Nate got a baseball scholarship to the University of Virginia. As a good power-hitting catcher.

Ostensible Book Review

The Fan Man is the perfect book to read my first night in Enfield, what with the sparrows,

continued on next page



by Rossalina Valdez, columnist

No matter how much the Omen has tried to be a place that welcomes people to write, we always lack the new blood.

What do we have to do to make all of you realize that we want your articles? That the Omen isn't a clique and that anyone that wants to write, do art, or just help with layout will be more than welcome?

It annoys and frustrates me that year after year we have to bend over backwards to get more people and what does that get us? People knocking us and

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invisible rats, sketchy refrigerator and looming threat of asbestos. Kotzwinkle is almost my favorite writer right now.

The Professional Wrestling

As of 10:16 PM, Sept. 2, I still cannot lift my arm up using my shoulder joint as it was biologically intended. My parents blame the professional wrestling. I blame a summer job that had me putting lots of heavy things on high shelves, and then later taking them down. You gotta love the professional wrestling.

I Want my Fiction Studio, Assholes

The beauty of online registration was shown to me last semester. No longer would I have to get my lazy ass to an advisor or central records. I could roll out of bed and register my unshaven, bathrobe wearing body from the comfort of my own dorm room.

SHORT AND SWEET

taking us to CRB. By the way, if anyone feels the need to CRB us this year, I'm good to go in March, better yet, make it my birthday present and have it in late February.

Maybe our problem is that we have tried to accomodate to everyone's need. Tried to make one group feel good but not meeting the needs of others. Or maybe the problem is that we've become this campus' bitch.

Yes, things have been said in the Omen that may not have been kosher with many students some time ago but a lot of the

students that said those things have been long gone and the current incarnation of the Omen is still stuck with the stigma. Having this stigma has made it easy for a lot of people to take shots at the Omen.

Well kids, to put it bluntly, fuck that. I'm sick and tired of the Omen sugarcoating things, afraid to say something that may be (god forbid) politically incorrect. And I'm tired of the Omen getting bent over backwards.

Let the games begin, folks. Who's game?

MORE ARTICLES ABOUT BUILDINGS...

real school, and thus filling up all these classes.

However, I am comforted by the fact, that myself, having completed five courses in my two years here at Hampshire am still around, while when a quarter of the first years do that (and it will happen, I don't care how motivated you fuckers think you are, you won't be for long, and there aren't enough courses to give all of your four a semester, never have been) you'll be out on your ass. So maybe the first year plan wasn't all bad, as it provides me with a little bit of perverse amusement. But I still want my second writing class, bitches.

Until next time

I will be squeezing out another semester's worth of articles into tidy bite-size morsels before THE MAN kicks me out of here.



SHAMELESS SURVIVAL SKILLS

Hi! I am a graduate! Yup, people actually get out of Camp Hamp and some of us even move away from the valley. I know hard to believe but its true, I swear it. By now you have been at Hampshire for two weeks (give or take, I really have no idea) and some of you may already be groaning about how horrible it is. Give it time it gets worse, er I mean better, yeah yeah much better (must put good plug in now for when I need a job later). But I am not here to tell you about what to expect from Hamp, I wouldn't want to steal the bitter ranting glory from some kid still trapped in the system; I wanna give you a sneak peak at what is in store for you in life after Hampshire. So here goes... survival skills for the real world, or at least life after Hampshire.

For those of you who attended the annual activist BBQ you should know that your ideals will leave you poor and most likely hungry. The rallying cry of Hamp kids is not join the Navy see the World. It's more like join Americorps or Join Peace Corps see the world. Sure or the dust and poverty of Eastern Montana. Oh yeah did I mention I am writing this from the Crank capitol of the west? Yup true story. Bet ya can't find my town

on the map without straining your eyes; Hardin, Montana go ahead I dare ya to find it. First non-Montanaian to find it and prove it somehow gets a fabulous prize. I went to that BBQ every year (sure it was mostly for the free food but still) armed with my idealistic desire to help people and what did it get me? \$48 dollars a month in foodstamps and a mouse in my apartment. I am slowly learning that doing good for others doesn't leave much cash for doing good for yourself. So be warned! Show that capitalist side, invest in stocks, store it all away in your mattress. Then go and help the world.

For those of you who abuse the phys plant services (you know who you are, the wallpainters and dirtydishleavers) change your evil ways before you are living with fuzzy friends. I like to think of myself as a clean person, I do my dishes and vacuum almost obsessively (I have to the entire apartment is carpeted and that includes the bathroom how fucked up is that?). And still I catch a

larger than average mouse like critter crawling up the arm of my comfy, re: only, chair. Is it the chill that is invading the night air that is sending this animal to me? The world will never know I suppose, but whoever can describe in detail

what a marmot is will also get a fabulous prize. All I know is that my apartment is the cleanest it has ever been in the attempt to keep the rodent from inviting his friends.

For those of you who think Walmart is the devil and think you will never shop there, try finding the thirty piece Martha Stewart silverware set anywhere else for under twenty bucks. Ok so Martha might be somewhat of the antichrist but she makes a fine set of silverware, and if you spend enough time in the Dakin H.O. you will develop a fondness for her magazine. Being cheap is a key factor in surviving life after Hampshire, and dang it Walmart is the king of cheap.

So to sum up give up some of those oh so cute ideals, clean up your shit, and love Walmart. If you need a catch phrase to remember the basics I give you the immortal words of some guy from Maine. Learn these words, Love them and Live by them, "I ain't proud, I'll kick my own ass."

Any questions about life after Hampshire should be directed to rhughes@hampshire.edu, everything will be answered and all will be revealed here in the Omen.



by Aaron Buchsbaum, columnist

THE FOOL IS PITIED

I would very much like a Snickers.

So. The auspicious beginnings to a second year here at Hampshire College. I didn't drop out so that must mean I like the place, or that I would feel empty without several of my friends speaking in Russian accents whenever they get pasted. Seriously though, I dig it here.

Div II seems like it should be quite the little educational foray. On top the ass-loads of learning that seems to be involved, there's something exciting about the prospect of recording every little scholastic thing I do for the next two years. The way I (sort-of) understand it, Div II is like a giant collegiate journal; you start out on Day 1 with a few entries from the previous semesters then slowly record more and more class-work, community service, and/or whatever else happens to be mildly relevant. I bought this flagrantly over-sized 2" green binder- honestly the thing's a behemoth- in the hopes that a couple years from now it will be brimming with some semblance of demonstrable knowledge. It seems a daunting task to produce enough Div II-relevant stuff to fill a binder the size of a hobbit hole, but at least it'll give me something to do in the meanwhile.

It's largely within the realm of such challenges that we really learn, anyway. I know I've heard various guidance/mentor/parent whatevers say as much (and dismissed it), but suddenly it seems a reasonable and acceptable piece of philosophy. I mean,

DIV II GOES GLOBAL

here I am: *I know more than you, and all my views are interesting.* Well, just bear with me for a couple more paragraphs- I was hoping I might briefly introduce you to someone who might have really had a clue in life: Henry Adams. To anyone foolhardy enough to read through this entire article, I implore you to pick-up the record of this thoughtful man's life-long blunderings towards a reticent ideal he calls 'education'. Adams' autobiography, aptly called 'The Education of Henry Adams', relays his 70+ years of travel, challenge, self-awareness, maturation, and failure. His musings are both humble and cognizant, and his ultimate dissatisfaction with his own life's progress serves well to demonstrate our human limitations. . . or our laziness, I don't quite know which it is. I think Adams got stuck in the muck, if you will, but seemed to learn an incredible amount in the process of doing so.

The Div II Power is MINE!



oh fudge.

That's just my hand on fire.

is more really a constant simply because life seems more interesting while one is engaged in slogging; The effort spent making all sorts of ungodly poo-like sounds shlucking through muck seems to pass the time. This isn't to say one can't stop and chill out for a while- I guess just be sure your boots don't get stuck.

I'm probably preaching by now, and I apologize. Not many people like to seriously consider views from someone yet grossly ignorant and asleep to a near-infinite amount of concepts. Yet



